



**2010
ADOPTED
RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE
74TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION**

**HOUSTON, TEXAS
APRIL 8-10, 2010**

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Diversity in the Conservation Movement

WHEREAS, to be successful in achieving conservation goals, the American conservation movement must reflect the diversity of socio-economic, cultural, ethnic, age, geographic and demographic factors that make up the nation as a whole; and

WHEREAS, successful conservation movements are networks built on relationships of trust, communication and shared resources, with inspirational leaders who actively recruit and foster collaboration to achieve clear outcomes, and encourage equitable participation at all levels; and

WHEREAS, creating a long-term commitment to conservation in diverse communities across the nation requires the weaving together of networks of partners that work at the nexus of natural resource protection, social equity and economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation works to enhance diversity within its affiliate network as well as within each affiliate organization in order to both strengthen the existing wildlife conservation movement and engage new individuals and diverse organizations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8 – 10, 2010 in Houston, Texas, hereby supports conservation organizations developing and engaging diverse leadership throughout the national conservation movement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation supports expanding the conservation movement by developing durable and relevant relationships with leaders of groups whose core missions relate to social equity, job creation, quality education, green economic development, livable communities and public health; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation supports the conservation movement bringing together and enabling a broad range of diversity perspectives through appropriate training; recruitment of new leadership, especially among youth; partnering with a wide range of organizations; and relevant and effective networking; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation supports the conservation movement creating and supporting a robust community of practice among conservation organizations that allows staff and volunteer leaders to strengthen the network and learn from each other by using online technology, coaching, workshops and regional gatherings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation supports conservation organizations developing a leadership pipeline of young people who represent the racial and cultural diversity of each state to become leaders in the conservation movement.

Energy Development on Federal Public Lands

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) has long treasured the unique and irreplaceable values of federal public lands, stating that these lands “represent a birthright of the American people” (Resolution No. 28, 1984); and

WHEREAS, for sixty years NWF has defended the value of public lands for wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreational uses (Resolution No. 1, 1960) and the importance of public lands and their proper management to wildlife conservation (Resolution No. 10, 1981; Resolution No. 14, 1989; Resolution No. 6, 1992); and

WHEREAS, NWF opposes any net loss of public lands through privatization and/or land disposal, including land exchanges “unless the fish and wildlife and recreational values of the lands acquired clearly exceed those of the lands lost” (Resolution No. 3, 2006); and

WHEREAS, NWF has formulated numerous resolutions relating to energy development on public lands, including: (1) Calling for the federal government to “prudently approach energy and mineral extraction to ensure that wildlife and recreation will not be unnecessarily sacrificed in a rush to extract energy and minerals from the public lands” (Resolution No. 10, 1981); (2) Calling for public land management agencies to “end their persistent pursuit of maximizing lands leased for energy development, which puts irreplaceable resources needlessly at risk” and calling on Congress and the agencies to “restore balance to our search for energy” and that “energy leasing and development policies must ensure the protection of critical fisheries, wildlife habitat and other sensitive natural resources” (Resolution No. 1, 1986); and (3) Promoting a national energy policy that protects the environment, encourages the efficient use of resources, and promotes the development of clean, renewable energy resources and calling on the federal government to increase its efforts toward controlling the adverse environmental impacts of energy production on federal public lands; and

WHEREAS, NWF has consistently supported development of domestic energy sources, both conventional (e.g., oil, natural gas, coal, etc.) and renewable (e.g., wind, solar, geothermal, etc.) including production, development and transmission (hereinafter termed “energy development”) in a manner that conserves other values on public lands such as wildlife and recreation, urging federal and state agencies with permitting authority over wind turbine projects to conduct a “thorough review of the project’s impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat including methods to minimize the impacts” and specifically to “avoid impacts on sage grouse and their habitat” (Resolution No. 11, 2004) and urging that “all commercial wind generator development proposals be evaluated in a public process to determine whether they meet U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) criteria” and encouraging state and local governments, federal agencies and other appropriate agencies “not to issue permits for wind generator development proposal that do not meet USFWS criteria” (Resolution No. 12, 2004); and

WHEREAS, energy development continues to significantly reduce the value of public lands in terms of wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreation, in spite of actions by NWF and others to minimize these negative impacts; and

WHEREAS, many energy development projects have resulted and continue to result in creation of sacrifice zones, where wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreation values are lost as a result of energy development without adequate mitigation; and

WHEREAS, growing emphasis on other conventional and renewable energy development is clearly targeting public lands for much of this development, with clear implications for the loss of wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreation values; and

WHEREAS, mitigation for energy development on public lands is often inadequate to compensate for losses in both quantity and quality of wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreation values; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation in previous resolutions has recognized that energy development including development on public lands should emphasize those energy sources that minimize the release of carbon into the atmosphere;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010 in Houston, Texas, urges Congress and appropriate federal agencies to adopt and enforce laws and policies associated with energy development that require “no net loss in the quantity and quality of public lands with respect to wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreational values; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation urges Congress and appropriate federal agencies to adopt and enforce laws and policies requiring all projects and programs for energy development on public lands to be reviewed in a manner that includes public input, a citizen suit provision, and assurance of complete mitigation as defined by Council on Environmental Quality for any losses in wildlife, wildlife habitat, and recreation values; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation urges other environmental and conservation organizations to promote energy development policies with “no net loss in the quantity and quality of public lands with respect to wildlife, wildlife habitat and recreation values”; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation urges the application of this resolved policy in all energy development related to conventional, renewable and future as yet unidentified sources, methods and applications.

Preventing the Development of High Carbon Liquid Fuels (Tar-Sands Oil, Oil Shale, and Liquefied Coal)

WHEREAS, global warming is a real and significant threat to wildlife, habitat and human health; and

WHEREAS, all carbon-based (and even renewable) energy sources have negative environmental impacts, some such as the high carbon liquid fuels tar-sands oil, oil shale, and liquefied coal have much greater impacts associated with their production; and

WHEREAS, development of the high carbon liquid fuels tar-sands oil, oil shale, and liquefied coal will increase and prolong global warming pollution in the United States, and threatens forested lands and rivers, and the wildlife that depend on unfragmented land, clean water, and clean air; and

WHEREAS, governments around the world, as alternatives to conventional petroleum, are looking to produce fuels like tar-sands oil, that emit three times more global warming pollution than conventional oil, generate toxic waste that pollute the air and water, and threaten wildlife species, habitats, and human health; and

WHEREAS, production of high carbon liquid fuels requires up to four times more water to extract one gallon of heavy crude than conventional production methods, which will contribute to shortages of drinking water throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the oil and coal industries continue to invest in new infrastructure such as pipelines and refineries that perpetuate the development of these fuels; and

WHEREAS, current federal and state policies subsidize the high carbon liquid fuels industry, resulting in artificially low costs to produce these fuels, and diverting resources away from the development of cleaner alternatives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010 in Houston, Texas, supports a strategy that includes litigation and advocacy to prevent expansion of tar-sands oil, oil shale, and liquefied coal in the U.S. by targeting new infrastructure that would support their expansion, including pipelines and refineries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NWF encourages conservation partners across the nation to raise awareness about the long-term negative effects of these fuel sources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NWF encourages Congress and the Administration to end federal subsidies for development of these high carbon liquid fuels, and shift those subsidies to cleaner, low-carbon alternatives.

Strengthening the Conservation Reserve Program

WHEREAS, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), enacted as part of the 1985 Farm Bill and reauthorized in each successive Farm Bill approved by Congress, has proven to be one of the most successful conservation measures in history -- reducing soil loss and improving water quality in the country's more highly erodible watersheds and providing vital long-term habitat for hundreds of wildlife species; and

WHEREAS, Congress recognized the far-reaching value of this program by setting an enrollment goal of up to 45 million acres in 1985; and

WHEREAS, annual enrollment periods are needed to enable agricultural producers to make sound and timely decisions regarding enrollment of highly erodible and other sensitive acres into this program, or to renew expiring contracts; and

WHEREAS, Congress established water quality, wildlife benefits and reduced soil loss as the purposes of the CRP program, yet administrative rulemaking has added additional purposes to the program, which reduces the co-equal weight shared by soil protection, water quality and wildlife benefits; and

WHEREAS, individual states--and technical committees tasked with providing advice on the CRP--better understand local and regional land use, land types and optimum conservation practices to attain those soil protection, water quality and wildlife benefit goals set out by Congress; and

WHEREAS, the CRP provides important benefits by storing large amounts of carbon by restoring marginal cropland to grassland or forest; and

WHEREAS, many economic uses of CRP land, such as wind energy development, haying, grazing, or biomass harvesting, if not carefully controlled and prohibited where incompatible, have the potential to detract from the statutory purpose of the program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010 in Houston, Texas, hereby urges the President, Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide funding and language to authorize a Conservation Reserve Program enrollment goal of up to 45 million acres; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NWF urges Congress and the Secretary of Agriculture to direct the Farm Service Agency to restore an annual enrollment period for general CRP contracts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NWF urges USDA, in its administrative rulemaking, to restore equal weight to the original CRP goals of reduced soil erosion, improved water quality and improved benefits for wildlife as it ranks factors and practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each state's Farm Service Agency be allowed flexibility to structure enrollment in—and ultimately provide payment for—specific continuous sign up conservation practices more suited to the land types and practices within that state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NWF urges USDA to adjust CRP rental rates on an annual basis to ensure that rates remain competitive; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NWF calls on USDA to limit any economic use of CRP land to those uses that are compatible with the primary purposes of CRP.

Management of Feral Horses and Burros

WHEREAS, the provisions of the Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, its amendments, and conditions imposed on yearly appropriations by Congress have resulted in excessive numbers of feral horses and burros on western rangelands; and

WHEREAS, a large portion of these rangelands have experienced wildfire, drought or near drought conditions in the recent years and climate forecasts offer little hope for relief; and

WHEREAS, wildlife numbers have decreased because of poor range conditions; and

WHEREAS, the population of feral horses and burros has increased far above appropriate management levels causing serious damage to riparian areas in particular and an increased rate of deterioration of rangeland health in general;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010, in Houston, Texas, hereby urges Congress to appropriate adequate funds for the federal agencies with responsibilities of public land management to implement plans that address the problem outlined above; and that these plans shall include: (a) a complete survey of feral horse and burro populations on public lands; (b) an immediate effort to reduce feral horse and burro populations to the low range of appropriate management levels; (c) managing all herds of captive unadoptable feral horses and burros to be non-reproducing; and (d) the use of multiple population control methods endorsed by professional wildlife managers on feral horse and burro herds to reduce populations to manageable levels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate federal agencies be required to document and file a bi-annual report to Congress on the impacts and damage on public lands and wildlife caused by feral horses and burros.

The Need for Urban Forestry Programs

WHEREAS, 80% of the United States population lives in urban areas, according to the US Forest Service; and

WHEREAS, urban and suburban sprawl has eliminated, damaged and or fragmented wildlife habitat for both flora and fauna; and

WHEREAS, the urban forest provides tangible environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, storm water/flood retention, noise reduction, cleaner air, better water quality, soil retention, reduction of greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, the presence of urban forests has documented, aesthetic benefits to the beauty and safety of neighborhoods, creates a healthier business environment and increases property value; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that when people are engaged in civic improvement activities within their neighborhood, on their street, in their housing unit or in their village town or city, the level of respect for their neighbors and fellow citizens increases significantly; and

WHEREAS, individuals who actively participate in the creation and maintenance of urban forests gain in self respect, learn new job skills, make new friends, earn increased recognition and sense of personal satisfaction and enjoy better mental and physical health; and

WHEREAS, the depletion and lack of wildlife in non-forested areas makes the human habitat less healthy, desirable and attractive resulting in less time spent outdoors and the consequent waning interest in nature; and

WHEREAS, climate change poses a severe threat to our urban forests most especially by increasing the stresses of temperature, drought, and high winds to which urban trees are more susceptible than those in the traditional forest land; and

WHEREAS, trees stressed by climate conditions are more susceptible to disease and premature death; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation has previously recognized that global warming has become the single greatest threat to wildlife and to the natural resources on which we all depend, and that forests can help combat the effects of climate change by storing and sequestering new carbon; and

WHEREAS, the recognition and importance of ‘No Child Left Inside’ initiatives can support the creation of urban forests that bring nature to urban areas, provide outdoor recreation space for children, and provide remedies for problems such as childhood obesity, nature deficit, and internet addiction disorders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8–10, 2010 in Houston, Texas, hereby supports national, state, regional, and community efforts to promote and fund the creation, existence and maintenance of urban forests and urban forestry programs in our communities, especially those that involve community support and ownership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state and federal funds for adaptation to climate change support the development and maintenance of large scale urban reforestation programs using regionally appropriate tree species in metropolitan areas across the U.S., and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that communities nationwide be made aware of and encouraged to use programs such as those provided by the US Forest Service Urban Forestry Program and other state and local public agencies, which encourage and promote the creation of healthier, more livable urban environments across the nation by maintaining, restoring and improving urban forest ecosystems.

Protecting Natural Resources & Wildlife from the Dangers of Hydraulic Fracturing

WHEREAS, drilling for natural gas using hydraulic fracturing has a greater potential than conventional gas drilling technologies to poison our air, land and water due to the chemicals and additives used and large quantities of wastes produced in the drilling process; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing technology has allowed energy companies to access and exploit gas resources in areas across the country that are largely undeveloped forest, range and other critical wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing uses large amounts of water from surface or groundwater sources and as a result threatens critical wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, there is currently inadequate wastewater treatment capacity to effectively and safely treat the type and volume of wastes produced by hydraulic fracturing; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing and the development of industrial infrastructure such as pipeline networks and roads will displace wildlife and destroy critical habitat; and

WHEREAS, federal laws and most state regulations do not require the chemical ingredients of hydraulic fracturing fluids to be disclosed to the public; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing is exempt from many major federal and state environmental laws including the Safe Drinking Water Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010, in Houston, Texas, hereby urges Congress and state legislatures to adopt legislation, and state and federal regulatory agencies to take immediate administrative actions, to protect natural resources, wildlife, and drinking water from all dangers of industrial hydraulic fracturing.

Hydrological Separation of the Mississippi River System and Great Lakes Basin

WHEREAS, the Mississippi River System and the Great Lakes Basin are artificially connected by a system of canals and waterways in the Chicago area, including the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal is used for sanitation purposes, commercial shipping, industrial intake and discharge, and for other purposes; and

WHEREAS, the connection created between the Great Lakes Basin and the Mississippi River System has opened a pathway for aquatic invasive species from one ecosystem to invade the other; and

WHEREAS, many invasions or the spread of aquatic invasive species have occurred via canals in the Great Lakes region, and some aquatic invasive species (e.g., the zebra mussel) have been extremely disruptive, both ecologically and economically; and

WHEREAS, certain aquatic invasive species that have already caused significant harm threaten to expand their ranges, including the round goby, which has already migrated from the Great Lakes Basin into the Illinois River, and Asian carp species, which have already migrated into the Illinois River and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal; and

WHEREAS, current efforts to block the migration of species consist of an electrical dispersal barrier (and a demonstration barrier still in operation) on the canal (near Romeoville, Illinois) with plans to construct a third electrical barrier and periodic application of fish toxicants; and

WHEREAS, the current system of electric fences, while critically important to address the invasive species migration while allowing barge passage, is not a 100% effective way to address the trans-migration of species; and

WHEREAS, environmental DNA evidence of Asian carp has been detected in many locations throughout the Chicago Area Waterway System above the electrical fences and in Lake Michigan; and

WHEREAS, current state and federal action to prevent the invasion of Asian carp into the Great Lakes ecosystem has been inadequate to protect the Great Lakes; and

WHEREAS, the only fully-effective permanent solution for stopping the movement of live organisms between the Mississippi River System and the Great Lakes Basin is to physically separate the two, any other option (e.g. technology barriers; dead zones, perpetual chemical treatments) being doomed to failure;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that National Wildlife Federation, in its annual meeting assembled April 8–10, 2010, in Houston, TX hereby calls for the hydrological

separation of the Mississippi River System and the Great Lakes Basin with the first priority severing the connection between the ecosystems at Chicago and eventually severing other connections between the ecosystems; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that National Wildlife Federation urges Congress and the Administration to expedite the hydrological separation of the Mississippi River System and Great Lakes Basin; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that hydrological separation must permanently block passage of aquatic organisms while allowing for waterborne commerce on both sides of the divide with connections to rail, highway and alternative transportation systems.

Trapping in National Wildlife Refuges

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Refuge System protects over 150 million acres and includes 551 National Wildlife Refuges in every state and U.S. territory; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Refuge System is essential to the conservation of fish, wildlife and plants in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation has long supported professional scientific management of wildlife resources and their habitat on National Wildlife Refuges; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recognized the importance of trapping on National Wildlife Refuges for predator control, for threatened and endangered species and migratory bird protection, habitat management, facilities protection, research, surveys, monitoring, public safety and health, feral animal control, population management, disease control, recreation, commerce and subsistence; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation has long recognized trapping as a legitimate recreational pursuit and a useful wildlife management tool; and

WHEREAS, periodically state and federal regulations are proposed that are not based on principles of professional scientific management and would directly or indirectly prohibit or severely restrict trapping on National Wildlife Refuges;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010, in Houston, Texas, reaffirms trapping to be a legitimate recreational pursuit and a useful scientifically-based wildlife management practice; and supports hunting, fishing and trapping on lands of the National Wildlife Refuge System when such activities are scientifically-regulated and are shown to be compatible with the primary purpose of these lands; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation opposes governmental regulations that would directly or indirectly prohibit or severely restrict trapping on National Wildlife Refuges if such regulations are not based on principles of professional scientific management.

Shark Conservation

WHEREAS, sharks have roamed our seas since before the time of dinosaurs, but their long reign at the top of the ocean food chain may be ending if measures are not taken to recover overharvested populations; and

WHEREAS, due to their late maturation and low reproductive rates, shark species in our fisheries are among the most susceptible to overfishing; and

WHEREAS, roughly 73 million sharks are caught annually by commercial fishing industry worldwide; and

WHEREAS, numerous scientific studies have documented huge declines in shark populations, by as much as 80% in some shark populations in U.S. waters since the 1970s; and

WHEREAS, increased demand for shark products has created one of the greatest impacts on shark populations through the wasteful practice of shark-finning – catching a shark, slicing off its fins, and discarding the shark (often still alive), at sea; and

WHEREAS, shark fins are valued for the Asian delicacy “shark fin soup” while shark meat, on the other hand, has little value in most seafood markets; and

WHEREAS, shark fins should only come from scientifically managed fisheries with approved shark fishery management plans;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled April 8-10, 2010 in Houston, Texas, urges the President and the Congress to take all necessary action to prohibit the wasteful practice of shark finning and to prohibit the transfer of shark fins from one vessel to another vessel at sea, or the receipt of shark fins in such a transfer without the fin naturally attached to the corresponding carcass; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation urges the President and the Congress to take all necessary action to require a fins-attached policy for all U.S. shark fisheries, including fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and Pacific Ocean; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation urges the President and the Congress to take all necessary action to promote shark conservation and reduce shark finning by other countries, especially by nations that export shark products to the U.S.